

coverage only in town centers and along major highways. High-cost support makes it financially feasible for wireless CETCs to deploy network facilities that extend coverage throughout a rural service area.

Accordingly, high-cost funds disbursed to wireless carriers flow through directly to the network infrastructure needed to provide and improve service to consumers in high-cost areas. Reductions in such funding would greatly diminish wireless carriers' incentives to make these investments. Such support reductions also would make it difficult or impossible for wireless carriers to engage in head-to-head competition with subsidized ILECs, thus undermining the Commission's key goal of removing artificial regulatory impediments to facilities-based, intermodal competition.

### **III. IF A CAP IS ADOPTED, CHANGES TO ITS STRUCTURE ARE NECESSARY**

Alltel urges the Commission not to adopt any form of CETC funding cap. Any cap on funding growth should apply to all ETCs, including ILECs – not just to CETCs.<sup>46</sup> However, if a CETC-only funding cap is adopted, it should be implemented in a manner that minimizes the harmful impact upon rural consumers and the CETCs that serve them, and should limit interference with competition to the extent possible. The following responds to specific questions raised in the RD (§§ 8-13) and the NPRM (§ 5) regarding the operation and implementation of the proposed cap.

#### **A. End-of-Year 2007 Support Levels Should be the Baseline, Rather Than Rolling Back CETC Funding to Calendar Year 2006 Levels**

The base period for any cap should be the end of calendar year 2007 – not the average of calendar year 2006 as proposed in the RD (§ 13). If the true objective were to provide some

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<sup>46</sup> See Letter from Richard Massey, Gene DeJordy, Steve Mowery, and Mark Rubin, Alltel, WC Docket No. 05-337 and CC Docket No. 96-45 (Mar. 27, 2007).

limitation on future CETC funding growth, then end-of-year 2007 levels could be a logical base period for a cap on CETC support. By contrast, use of an earlier base period would not only limit future fund growth, it would also cause dramatic and immediate funding reductions to existing CETCs, with no justification.

The RD concedes that use of a 2006 base year "results in a lower cap in most jurisdictions than the level of support that is being distributed in 2007." In fact, use of the average levels during the four quarters of 2006 as the base year would result in setting support levels in future time periods based on data that may have been reported as early as October 2005, and would immediately reduce CETCs' support by a substantial amount. Such a roll-back of support, immediately reducing the funding upon which capital investment decisions were made, could make it difficult or impossible for CETCs to deliver on their implement specific build-out commitments they may already have made to the FCC and state commissions (pursuant to 47 U.S.C. §§ 202, 207, and comparable provisions of state law). Such an extreme reduction in support also could cause rate shock for consumers in high-cost areas, to the extent CETCs need to adjust for the reduction in support by increasing their rates in rural areas. In sum, a rollback of support to 2006 levels would constitute an improper and unlawful retroactive rulemaking.

**B. A Hard Sunset Date Should Apply To Ensure That Any Cap is Truly "Interim"**

The RD proposes that the CETC funding cap remain in effect for 12 months after "the date of any Joint Board recommended decision on comprehensive and fundamental universal service reform," and expresses a commitment to issuing such a decision within 6 months. ¶ 8. Rather than accepting this proposal, the Commission should adopt a "hard" sunset date – e.g., the end of the second calendar quarter following the effective date of the Order – and should specify

that CETC support will revert to the levels specified in the pre-existing rules if no further action is taken by that date.

First, the duration proposed in the RD is too long. In the rapidly changing telecommunications marketplace, 18 months in essence is forever. Such a lengthy funding restriction, even if later rectified, would give ILECs tremendous competitive advantages over wireless CETCs during 2007 and 2008, which would be difficult or impossible to remedy later. If the Commission is serious here about adopting a rule that is only "interim," "temporary," or on an "emergency" basis, it should similarly make the duration short (e.g., 6-9 months) and the expiration date automatic.<sup>47</sup>

Establishing a "hard" sunset date also will help address the concerns addressed by many parties that an interim funding cap "will be interpreted by many as movement enough to justify putting the larger universal service reform imperative on the back burner."<sup>48</sup> For similar reasons, other Joint Board members also expressed concerns about the possibility that the proposed CETC fund cap could extend for a longer time period.<sup>49</sup> Limiting any CETC-only funding cap to the shortest possible period of time would ensure that the Joint Board and the Commission remain focused on the larger and more important task: to address "the fundamental,

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<sup>47</sup> See *supra* note 18 (describing an interim rule with a hard sunset date).

<sup>48</sup> RD, Dissenting Statement of Commissioner Michael Copps. See also Letter from Senators Rockefeller, Pryor, Dorgan, Klobuchar, and Smith, to Commissioner Tate and Commissioner Baum (Mar. 21, 2007) ("Instead of limiting rural consumers' options, the Joint Board should focus its efforts on long-term and even-handed interim and long term reform measures. It seems worthwhile to us that the Board should seriously consider competitively neutral proposals, ensure accountability for how funds are used, and promote build-out of advanced services in rural regions through effective targeting of funds to high-cost areas.... We also believe that a cap, especially one imposed only on certain carriers, would not provide incentives to all stakeholders to engage in thoughtful negotiations on how to best reform the USF. Although the cap is reported to be only a temporary cap, we are concerned that it would become a de facto permanent cap. Unless all recipients have an incentive to find solutions to controlling the growth of the USF, we do not believe that the Joint Board or the FCC would ever be able to adopt measures to reform and modernize the administration of the USF.").

<sup>49</sup> See, e.g., Statement of Commissioner John Burke ("I would hope then that the cap never be extended beyond the 18 month period contemplated as the outside margin of this recommendation for development and adoption of these more comprehensive reforms."); Concurring Statement of Commissioner Ray Baum ("My support for a cap of this nature is limited to the 18 months outlined in today's decision.")

comprehensive reforms needed to carry a viable and improved system of universal service forward in the twenty-first century."<sup>50</sup>

### CONCLUSION

For the reasons set forth above and in Alltel's past filings in these dockets, Alltel urges the Commission to reject the Recommended Decision, and instead to proceed with consideration of sustainable long-term solutions that will be competitively neutral and promote the interests of consumers in rural America.

Respectfully submitted,

ALLTEL CORP.

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Gene DeJordy,  
Senior Vice President, Regulatory  
Affairs  
Steve Mowery,  
Vice President, Public Policy  
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Counsel for Alltel Corp.

Mark Rubin,  
Vice President, Federal Government  
Affairs  
Alltel Corp.  
601 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Suite 720  
Washington, DC 20004

June 6, 2007

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<sup>50</sup> RD, Dissenting Statement of Commissioner Michael Copps.



## State of North Carolina Utilities Commission

COMMISSIONERS  
EDWARD S. FINLEY, JR., Chairman  
ROBERT V. OWENS, JR.  
SAM J. ERVIN, IV

4325 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, N. C. 27699-4325

COMMISSIONERS  
LORINZO L. JOYNER  
JAMES Y. KERR, II  
HOWARD N. LEE  
WILLIAM T. CULPEPPER, III

May 1, 2007

*Debi*  
Deborah Taylor Tate  
Commissioner  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

*Ray*  
Ray Baum  
Chairman  
Oregon Public Utility Commission  
550 Capitol Street, N.E., Suite 215  
Salem, Oregon 97308-2148

**Re: *Written Ex Parte Communication - electronically filed in the proceeding captioned: In the Matter of High-Cost Universal Service Support, Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service, WC Docket No. 05-337, CC Docket No. 06-45***

Dear Commissioners Tate and Baum:

The North Carolina Utilities Commission (NCUC) has not taken any official position in this proceeding. However, I am writing in my capacity as an *individual* member of the NCUC.

I first want to thank you and your colleagues for your good and hard work on the Federal State Joint Board on Universal Service. Universal service reform is a complex and difficult issue, but an issue that is critical to all consumers, particularly those in rural areas.

Consumers in rural parts of North Carolina expect access to the same quality and types of services as their urban counterparts. In addition to traditional landline service, they are demanding state-of-the-art services that include vertical services, broadband and wireless. Universal service support is an essential element of providing these vital services to rural areas with service levels and rates comparable to those available in urban areas. Specifically, it is my belief

Commissioners Tate and Baum  
May 1, 2007  
Page 2

that rural consumers want and deserve access to the mobility and safety benefits that only wireless service provides. Without appropriate support for the expansion and upgrading of the rural wireless networks, consumers in areas lacking wireless service might not receive these benefits.

I have observed that momentum seems to be building at the Joint Board to attempt to resolve concerns regarding growth of the universal service fund. As you deal with this issue, I urge to you consider reforms that are fair and equitable to all providers without regard to the underlying technology. Rural consumers want and need expanded and improved services for public safety, economic development, business and personal needs that are equally as important to them as they are to urban consumers. This is one of the main benefits that rural consumers receive from the universal service fund, just as Congress envisioned when it initially established the fund.

I respectfully request that you carefully consider these facts as you seek to reform the existing fund. I ask you to find competitively neutral proposals to slow fund growth, ensure accountability for how these funds are used and promote the continued expansion and improvement of much needed services in rural areas.

I thank you for your continued service to our nation and for your willingness to deal thoughtfully with these difficult and important issues.

With best wishes, and warm personal regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

  
James Y. Kerr, II

cc: Chairman Kevin J. Martin  
Commissioner Michael J. Copps  
Commissioner Lisa Polak Edgar  
Commissioner Larry S. Landis  
Commissioner John D. Burke  
Billy Jack Gregg

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA  
State Budget and Control Board  
OFFICE OF RESEARCH & STATISTICS

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STATE TREASURER

RICHARD BOELSTROM  
COMPTROLLER GENERAL



HUGH E. LEATHERMAN, SR.  
CHAIRMAN, SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE

DANIEL T. COOPER  
CHAIRMAN, WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

REMBERT C. DENNIS BUILDING  
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Fax: (803) 734-3619

Bobby Bowers  
DIRECTOR

To: Kevin J. Martin, Chairman  
Michael J Copps, Commissioner  
Jonathan S Adelstein, Commissioner  
Deborah Taylor Tate, Commissioner  
Robert M McDowell, Commissioner

Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street SW  
Washington D. C. 20554

RE: Universal Service Reform - WC Docket No. 05-337

Dear Chairman and Commissioners:

I am a lawyer and the State E9-1-1 Project Manager in South Carolina, which included the primary drafting of amendments to South Carolina and implementation and administration of the state wireless 911 surcharge and E9-1-1 program. I am also an example and personally biased, as I live, often alone, in the woods on Lake Wateree in rural Fairfield county, 20 miles from any medical facility or ambulance, with no neighbors within half a mile, inadequate to no wireless service, and much use for a chain saw.

Personally and as a servant of South Carolina 911, I oppose the FCC placing a cap on the use of the Universal Service Fund (USF) for wireless service. Although such a cap may help eliminate the growth of this fund, it would also result in a number of disservices to rural consumers. Rural consumers want and need expanded and improved wireless services in rural areas for public safety, economic development, business and personal needs that are equally important to them as they are to urban consumers. This is one of the main benefits that rural consumers receive from the universal service fund, just as Congress envisioned when it initially established the fund. Rural Americans deserve the same access to telecom services that are available in the rest of the country—which is the bottom line purpose of the USF? Furthermore, such a wireless only cap is anti-competitive because it favors wireline services over the wireless services consumers are choosing more and more over landlines for economic and other benefits.

Consumers are clearly demanding access to the benefits of mobility that only wireless service provides. This mobility results in extremely important public safety benefits in rural areas. As rural

consumers travel from home to work or school, wireless service provides a very valuable safety tool. Additionally, wireless service in rural areas provides consumers with access to broadband services where broadband services are not otherwise available. This is a very important factor as we seek to bring access to the information age throughout our very rural state. Without continued support for the expansion and upgrading of the rural wireless networks, consumers will not receive these benefits where they do not already exist. Universal service support is essential if rural consumers are to be provided services and rates comparable to those available in urban areas.

I have witnessed firsthand the benefits provided by expanded wireless services in rural South Carolina, and I do not want to see those benefits diminished by inappropriate USF reform. I believe much of the expanded availability of wireless service in rural areas would not have occurred without the USF support provided to wireless ETCs who could not have economically extended their networks without such support.

Please consider what limiting the growth of wireless access will mean for rural America. Wireless technology plays an ever-increasing role in economic growth and is a critical instrument in emergency situations, but if the recommended cap is implemented, many communities may never realize these benefits. In a country that prides itself on equality, it seems hypocritical to restrict certain individuals' access to an essential tool simply because of their geographic location, especially when they have contributed for years to the USF along with everyone else.

The FCC's rule making has always impressed and satisfied me, to the extent I've understood the complex, rapidly evolving, even revolutionary, issues with which it deals. Consequently I am confident it will consider these facts as it reforms the existing fund, and find competitively neutral proposals to slow fund growth, ensure accountability for how these funds are used and promote the continued expansion and improvement of these much needed services in rural areas by targeting funds to high cost areas rather than by targeting cost reductions at wireless providers. However, FCC rulemaking includes the views of the consumers and public safety communications professionals, so I urge you to vote against the proposed cap on universal service support for wireless service.

Sincerely,

James W. Rion

SC State E9-1-1 Project Manager



May 6, 2007

Washington, D.C.  
United States Senate  
716 Senate Hart Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510  
Phone: 202-224-5274  
Fax: 202-228-2183

Re: wireless in Gulf County

Dear Senator Nelson:

The original purpose of the Universal Service Fund is to offset the cost of building communications networks in high cost, low-income rural areas. If reforms are made to the USF, it should not be made at the expense of citizens living in less populated areas.

Last week's recommendation to the FCC, by the Federal State joint board on USF to cap funding for wireless to 2006 levels will be a major step-back for Gulf County. We already contend with limited or no cell service between Highway 386 and the county line or basically the entire middle of our county.

I am the 911 coordinator for Gulf County. This is a public safety issue for callers needing medical services who can't get a signal to call for help. It is also problematic for our responders who sometimes can not communicate while out on a call.

Sincerely,

Ben Guthrie, ENP  
Gulf County 911 coordinator

CC: Lisa Polak Edgar, Florida Public Service Commission



**FRANK SCROGGINS**  
**LAFAYETTE COUNTY JUDGE**

1 COURTHOUSE SQUARE • LEWISVILLE, ARKANSAS 72845 • PHONE (870) 921-4858

May 31, 2007

To: Kevin J. Martin, Chairman  
Michael J Copps, Commissioner  
Jonathan S Adelstein, Commissioner  
Deborah Taylor Tate, Commissioner  
Robert M McDowell, Commissioner

Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street SW  
Washington D. C. 20554

RE: Universal Service Reform - WC Docket No. 05-337

Dear Chairman and Commissioners:

I understand that the FCC is considering placing a cap on the use of the Universal Service Fund (USF) for wireless service. I am contacting you to express my opposition to this unfair, arbitrary proposal. While such an approach may provide a "quick-fix" leading to the rapid elimination of fund growth, it would also result in a terrible disservice to rural consumers. Rural consumers want and need expanded and improved wireless services in rural areas for public safety, economic development, business and personal needs that are equally important to them as they are to urban consumers. This is one of the main benefits that rural consumers receive from the universal service fund, just as Congress envisioned when it initially established the fund. A wireless-only cap is clearly anti-competitive because it singles out wireless technology, which consumers are choosing more and more over landlines. We should be rewarding competition, not punishing it. What's more, rural Americans deserve the same access to telecom services that are available in the rest of the country—isn't that the purpose of the USF?

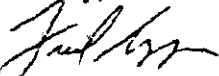
Consumers in rural parts of Arkansas are no longer content to have access to only traditional wireline telephone service. Consumers are clearly demanding access to the benefits of mobility that only wireless service provides. This mobility results in extremely important public safety benefits in rural areas. As rural consumers travel from home to work or school, wireless service provides a very valuable safety tool. Additionally, wireless service in rural areas provides consumers with access to broadband services where broadband services are not otherwise available. This is a very important factor as we seek to bring access to the information age throughout our very rural state. Without continued support for the expansion and upgrading of the rural wireless networks, consumers will not receive these benefits where they do not already exist. Universal service support is essential if rural consumers are to be provided service and rates comparable to those available in urban areas.

I have witnessed firsthand the benefits provided by expanded wireless services in rural Arkansas, and I do not want to see those benefits diminished by inappropriate USF reform. Much of the expanded availability of wireless service in rural areas would not have occurred without the USF support provided to wireless ETCs who could not have economically extended their networks without such support.

Please consider what limiting the growth of wireless access will mean for rural America. Wireless technology plays an ever-increasing role in economic growth and is a critical instrument in emergency situations, but if the recommended cap is implemented, many communities may never realize these benefits. In a country that prides itself on equality, it seems hypocritical to restrict certain individuals' access to an essential tool simply because of their geographic location, especially when they have contributed for years to the USF along with everyone else.

I respectfully request that you carefully consider these facts as you seek to reform the existing fund. I ask you to find competitively neutral proposals to slow fund growth, ensure accountability for how these funds are used and promote the continued expansion and improvement of these much needed services in rural areas by targeting funds to high cost areas rather than by targeting reforms to wireless providers. I urge you to vote against the proposed cap on universal service support for wireless service.

Sincerely,



Frank Scroggins  
Lafayette County Judge

ALLEN C. HOLDER  
DIRECTOR

Lincoln  
COUNTY - 911  
**COMMUNICATIONS**

911 Marconi Drive • West Hamlin, WV 26571  
www.e911.org

304-824-3413  
EMERGENCY 911  
FAX 304-824-3342  
E-Mail: allen.holder@e911.org

May 31, 2007

To: Kevin J. Martin, Chairman  
Michael J Copps, Commissioner  
Jonathan S Adelstein, Commissioner  
Deborah Taylor Tate, Commissioner  
Robert M McDowell, Commissioner

Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street SW  
Washington D. C. 20554

RE: Universal Service Reform - WC Docket No. 05-337

Dear Chairman and Commissioners:

I understand that the FCC is considering placing a cap on the use of the Universal Service Fund (USF) for wireless service. I am contacting you to express my opposition to this unfair, arbitrary proposal. While such an approach may provide a "quick-fix" leading to the rapid elimination of fund growth, it would also result in a terrible disservice to rural consumers. Rural consumers want and need expanded and improved wireless services in rural areas for public safety, economic development, business and personal needs that are equally important to them as they are to urban consumers. This is one of the main benefits that rural consumers receive from the universal service fund, just as Congress envisioned when it initially established the fund. A wireless-only cap is clearly anti-competitive because it singles out wireless technology, which consumers are choosing more and more over landlines. We should be rewarding competition, not punishing it. What's more, rural Americans deserve the same access to telecom services that are available in the rest of the country— isn't that the purpose of the USF?

Consumers in rural parts of West Virginia are no longer content to have access to only traditional wireline telephone service. Consumers are clearly demanding access to the benefits of mobility that only wireless service provides. This mobility results in extremely important public safety benefits in rural areas. As rural consumers travel from home to work or school, wireless service provides a very valuable safety tool. Additionally, wireless service in rural areas provides consumers with access to broadband services where broadband services are not otherwise available. This is a very important factor as we seek to bring access to the information age throughout our very rural state. Without continued support for the expansion and upgrading of the rural wireless networks, consumers will not receive these benefits where they do not already exist.

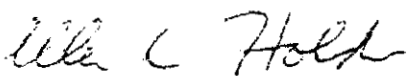
Universal service support is essential if rural consumers are to be provided service and rates comparable to those available in urban areas.

I have witnessed firsthand the benefits provided by expanded wireless services in rural West Virginia, and I do not want to see those benefits diminished by inappropriate USF reform. Much of the expanded availability of wireless service in rural areas would not have occurred without the USF support provided to wireless ETCs who could not have economically extended their networks without such support.

Please consider what limiting the growth of wireless access will mean for rural America. Wireless technology plays an ever-increasing role in economic growth and is a critical instrument in emergency situations, but if the recommended cap is implemented, many communities may never realize these benefits. In a country that prides itself on equality, it seems hypocritical to restrict certain individuals' access to an essential tool simply because of their geographic location, especially when they have contributed for years to the USF along with everyone else.

I respectfully request that you carefully consider these facts as you seek to reform the existing fund. I ask you to find competitively neutral proposals to slow fund growth, ensure accountability for how these funds are used and promote the continued expansion and improvement of these much needed services in rural areas by targeting funds to high cost areas rather than by targeting reforms to wireless providers. I urge you to vote against the proposed cap on universal service support for wireless service.

Sincerely,



Allen C. Holder/Director  
ENP



**Stanley E. Reed**  
*President*

June 5, 2007

Chairman Kevin Martin  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Martin:

The Arkansas Farm Bureau Federation with over 230,000 member families is the state's largest advocacy organization for rural Arkansans. As such, we feel it important to our membership that we provide input into the proposal by the Federal-State Joint Review Board of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) that would cap subsidies to wireless carriers from the Universal Service Fund (USF).

A high percentage of our members are farmers and ranchers who rely on the availability and convenience of wireless communications to conduct their business. Continued development of infrastructure for wireless communications is extremely important to our members who operate in rural areas which are naturally higher cost service areas. It is our understanding that infrastructure development in these areas is the primary purpose for which the USF was established.

We understand the need for the FCC to reform the entire USF program but we strongly support continuation of the USF to maintain affordable communication services in rural America, in general, and rural Arkansas specifically. We do not feel that capping payments to wireless service providers while determining reform measures is the answer, especially when one considers the fact that wireless consumers will continue to contribute to the fund.

Agriculture is our state's largest industry. Impacting the ability of our state's agriculture producers to have access to the latest wireless network, and the ever-changing applications that come with that technology, would hamper our state's most significant economic engine.

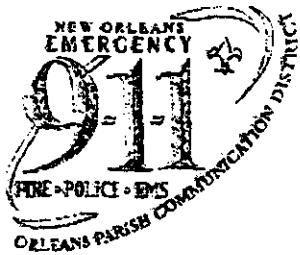
Again, please note our strong opposition to the proposal to cap payments from the USF for wireless service providers. We encourage the FCC not to implement the proposed caps on the wireless industry. I appreciate the opportunity to express the concerns of our organization on this most important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Stanley E. Reed".

Stanley E. Reed  
President

cc: Senator Blanche Lincoln  
Senator Mark Pryor



## ORLEANS PARISH COMMUNICATION DISTRICT

Administrators of New Orleans' 9-1-1 System

June 5, 2007

### BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS:

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Orleans Parish Medical Society

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Supt. Warren Riley  
N. O. Police Department

Lt. Col. Jerry Sneed, Director  
N. O. Emergency Preparedness

Kevin L. Stephens, MD, JD, Director  
N. O. Department of Health

Dwayne Thomas, MD, CEO  
Medical Center of Louisiana

Dan Gilbert, J.D.  
Interim Executive Director

To: Kevin J. Martin, Chairman

Michael J Copps, Commissioner

Jonathan S Adelstein, Commissioner

Deborah Taylor Tate, Commissioner

Robert M McDowell, Commissioner

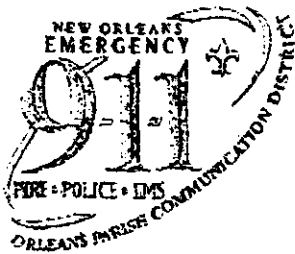
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street SW  
Washington D. C. 20554

RE: Universal Service Reform - WC Docket No. 05-337

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I understand that the FCC is considering placing a cap on the use of the Universal Service Fund (USF) for wireless service. I am contacting you to express my opposition to this unfair, arbitrary proposal. While such an approach may provide a "quick-fix" leading to the rapid elimination of fund growth, it would also result in a terrible disservice to rural consumers. Rural consumers want and need expanded and improved wireless services in rural areas for public safety, economic development, business and personal needs that are equally important to them as they are to urban consumers. This is one of the main benefits that rural consumers receive from the universal service fund, just as Congress envisioned when it initially established the fund. A wireless-only cap is clearly anti-competitive because it singles out wireless technology, which consumers are choosing more and more over landlines. We should be rewarding competition, not punishing it. What's more, rural Americans deserve the same access to telecom services that are available in the rest of the country—isn't that the purpose of the USF?

Consumers in rural parts of Louisiana are no longer content to have access to only traditional wireline telephone service. Consumers are clearly demanding access to the benefits of mobility that only wireless service provides. This mobility results in extremely important public safety benefits in rural areas. As rural consumers travel from home to



## ORLEANS PARISH COMMUNICATION DISTRICT

*Administrators of New Orleans' 9-1-1 System*

work or school, wireless service provides a very valuable safety tool. Additionally, wireless service in rural areas provides consumers with access to broadband services where broadband services are not otherwise available. This is a very important factor as we seek to bring access to the information age throughout our very rural state. Without continued support for the expansion and upgrading of the rural wireless networks, consumers will not receive these benefits where they do not already exist. Universal service support is essential if rural consumers are to be provided service and rates comparable to those available in urban areas.

I have witnessed firsthand the benefits provided by expanded wireless services in rural Louisiana, and I do not want to see those benefits diminished by inappropriate USF reform. Much of the expanded availability of wireless service in rural areas would not have occurred without the USF support provided to wireless ETCs who could not have economically extended their networks without such support.

Please consider what limiting the growth of wireless access will mean for rural America. Wireless technology plays an ever-increasing role in economic growth and is a critical instrument in emergency situations, but if the recommended cap is implemented, many communities may never realize these benefits. In a country that prides itself on equality, it seems hypocritical to restrict certain individuals' access to an essential tool simply because of their geographic location, especially when they have contributed for years to the USF along with everyone else.

**DAN GILBERT**

Executive Director (Interim)  
Orleans Parish Communication District  
100 City Park Avenue  
New Orleans, LA 70119  
Cell: 504-931-9742  
Facsimile: 504-671-3911





JERRY HUNTON  
County Judge

280 North College, Suite 500  
Fayetteville, AR 72701

WASHINGTON COUNTY, ARKANSAS  
County Courthouse

June 5, 2007

Kevin J. Martin, Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street SW  
Washington D. C. 20554

RE: Universal Service Reform - WC Docket No. 05-337

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Consumers in rural parts of Arkansas are no longer content to have access to only traditional wireline telephone service. Consumers are clearly demanding access to the benefits of mobility that only wireless service provides. This mobility results in extremely important public safety benefits in rural areas. As rural consumers travel from home to work or school, wireless service provides a very valuable safety tool. Additionally, wireless service in rural areas provides consumers with access to broadband services where broadband services are not otherwise available. This is a very important factor as we seek to bring access to the information age throughout our very rural state. Without continued support for the expansion and upgrading of the rural wireless networks, consumers will

Kevin J. Martin  
Page 2

June 5, 2007

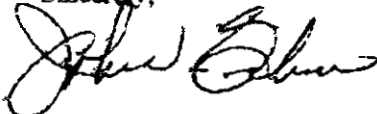
not receive these benefits where they do not already exist. Universal service support is essential if rural consumers are to be provided service and rates comparable to those available in urban areas.

I have witnessed firsthand the benefits provided by expanded wireless services in rural Arkansas, and I do not want to see those benefits diminished by inappropriate USF reform. Much of the expanded availability of wireless service in rural areas would not have occurred without the USF support provided to wireless ETCs who could not have economically extended their networks without such support.

Please consider what limiting the growth of wireless access will mean for rural America. Wireless technology plays an ever-increasing role in economic growth and is a critical instrument in emergency situations, but if the recommended cap is implemented, many communities may never realize these benefits. In a country that prides itself on equality, it seems hypocritical to restrict certain individuals' access to an essential tool simply because of their geographic location, especially when they have contributed for years to the USF along with everyone else.

I respectfully request that you carefully consider these facts as you seek to reform the existing fund. I ask you to find competitively neutral proposals to slow fund growth, ensure accountability for how these funds are used and promote the continued expansion and improvement of these much needed services in rural areas by targeting funds to high-cost areas rather than by targeting reforms to wireless providers. I urge you to vote against the proposed cap on universal service support for wireless service.

Sincerely,



John W. Gibson  
County Administrator

JWG:va

cc: Michael J. Copps, Commissioner  
cc: Jonathan S. Adelstein, Commissioner  
cc: Deborah Taylor Tate, Commissioner  
cc: Robert M. McDowell, Commissioner



Representative Harold J. Brubaker  
North Carolina General Assembly  
Legislative Building, Room 1229  
Raleigh, North Carolina 27601-1096  
78<sup>th</sup> District

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE, 1995-1999

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COMMITTEES

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RULES, CALENDAR AND OPERATIONS  
OF THE HOUSE  
UNIVERSITY BOARD OF GOVERNORS  
NOMINATING COMMITTEE

May 30, 2007

To: Kevin J. Martin, Chairman  
Michael J. Copps, Commissioner  
Jonathan S. Adelstein, Commissioner  
Deborah Taylor Tate, Commissioner  
Robert M. McDowell, Commissioner

Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street SW  
Washington D. C. 20554

Dear Chairman and Commissioners:

I understand that the FCC is considering placing a cap on the use of the Universal Service Fund (USF) for wireless service. I am contacting you to express my opposition to this unfair, arbitrary proposal. While such an approach may provide a quick-fix leading to the rapid elimination of fund growth, it would also result in a terrible disservice to rural consumers. Rural consumers want and need expanded and improved wireless services in rural areas for public safety, economic development, business and personal needs that are equally important to them as they are to urban consumers. This is one of the main benefits that rural consumers receive from the universal service fund, just as Congress envisioned when it initially established the fund. A wireless-only cap is clearly anti-competitive because it singles out wireless technology, which consumers are choosing more and more over landlines. We should be rewarding competition, not punishing it. What's more, rural Americans deserve the same access to telecom services that are available in the rest of the country—isn't that the purpose of the USF? Consumers in rural parts of North Carolina are no longer content to have access to only traditional wireline telephone service. Consumers are clearly demanding access to the



Federal Communications Commission  
May 30, 2007  
Page -2-

benefits of mobility that only wireless service provides. This mobility results in extremely important public safety benefits in rural areas. As rural consumers travel from home to work or school, wireless service provides a very valuable safety tool. Without the continued needed support for the expansion and upgrading of the rural wireless networks, consumers will not receive these benefits where they do not already exist. Universal service support is essential if rural consumers are to be provided service and rates comparable to those available in urban areas.

I have witnessed firsthand the benefits provided by expanded wireless services in rural North Carolina, and I do not want to see those benefits diminished by USF reform. Much of the expanded availability of wireless service in rural areas would not have occurred without the USF support provided to wireless ETCs who could not have economically extended their networks without such support.

Please consider what limiting the growth of wireless access will mean for rural America: wireless technology plays an ever-increasing role in economic growth and is a critical instrument in emergency situations, but if the recommended cap is implemented, many communities may never realize these benefits. In a country that prides itself on equality, it seems hypocritical to restrict certain individuals' access to an essential tool simply because of their geographic location, especially when they have contributed for years to the USF along with everyone else.

I respectfully request that you carefully consider these facts as you seek to reform the existing fund. I ask you to find competitively neutral proposals to slow fund growth, ensure accountability for how these funds are used and promote the continued expansion and improvement of these much needed services in rural areas by targeting funds to high cost areas rather than by targeting reforms to wireless providers. I urge you to vote against the proposed cap on universal service support for wireless service.

Sincerely,

Representative Harold J. Brubaker  
78<sup>th</sup> District

HJB:lhc

CC: US Senators and Congressmen from North Carolina

May 22, 2007

Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street SW  
Washington D. C. 20554

To: Kevin J. Martin, Chairman  
Michael J Copps, Commissioner  
Jonathan S Adelstein, Commissioner  
Deborah Taylor Tate, Commissioner  
Robert M McDowell, Commissioner

Dear Mister Chairman and Commissioners:

I understand that the FCC is considering placing a cap on the use of the Universal Service Fund (USF) for wireless service. I am contacting you to express my opposition to this proposal that I consider unfair and arbitrary. While such an approach may provide a quick-fix leading to the rapid elimination of fund growth, it would also result in a terrible disservice to rural consumers. Rural consumers want and need expanded and improved wireless services in rural areas for public safety, economic development, and business and personal needs that are equally as important to them as they are to urban consumers. This is one of the main benefits that rural consumers receive from the universal service fund, just as Congress envisioned when it initially established the fund. A wireless-only cap appears to be clearly anti-competitive because it singles out wireless technology only. Today, consumers are choosing wireless more and more over landlines. I believe that we should be rewarding competition, not punishing it. What's more, rural Americans deserve the same access to telecom services that are available in the rest of the country. My understanding is that that is the purpose of the USF?

In my state of South Carolina, consumers in rural parts are no longer content to only have access to traditional wireline telephone service. Consumers are clearly demanding access to the benefits of mobility that only wireless service provides. This mobility results in extremely important public safety benefits in rural areas. As rural consumers travel from home to work or school, wireless service provides a very valuable

safety tool. Without the continued, and greatly needed, support for the expansion and upgrading of the rural wireless networks, consumers will not receive these benefits where they presently do not already exist. Universal service support is essential if rural consumers are to be provided service and rates comparable to those available in urban areas.

I have witnessed firsthand the benefits provided by expanded wireless services in rural South Carolina, and I do not want to see those benefits diminished by USF reform. Much of the expanded availability of wireless service in rural areas would not have occurred without the USF support provided to wireless ETCs who could not have economically extended their networks without such support.

Please consider what limiting the growth of wireless access will mean for rural America: wireless technology plays an ever-increasing role in economic growth and is a critical instrument in emergency situations. However, if the recommended cap is implemented, many communities may never realize these benefits. In a country that prides itself on equality, it seems hypocritical to restrict certain individuals' access to an essential tool simply because of their geographic location, especially when they have contributed for years to the USF, along with everyone else.

I respectfully request that you carefully consider these facts as you seek to reform the existing fund. I ask you to seek competitively neutral proposals to slow fund growth, ensure accountability for how these funds are used and promote the continued expansion and improvement of these much needed services in rural areas. You could possibly do so by targeting funds to high cost areas rather than by targeting reforms to wireless providers. I urge you to vote against the proposed cap on universal service support for wireless service.

Sincerely,

Bill Sandifer  
Member, SC House of Representatives  
Chairman, Public Utilities Sub-Committee

CC: South Carolina US Senators and Congressmen.



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**ARIZONA TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION COUNCIL**

[www.arizonatele.com/atic/](http://www.arizonatele.com/atic/)

Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
Office of the Secretary  
445 12th Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

*{Transmitted by email}*

RE: WC Docket No. 05-337

Dear Secretary Dortch,

I am writing you on behalf of the board members of the Arizona Telecommunications and Information Council (ATIC).

We, the ATIC Board, concur with the recommendation from The Honorable Senator John McCain from Arizona and his colleagues that an overall CAP needs to be placed on the Universal Service Fund (USF). Such an overall CAP can provide necessary time to study and revamp USF allocations for modern realities. We further urge the Joint Board and the Commission efforts to revamp the USF to include broadband infrastructure development. Additionally, to ensure a level playing field, we agree with Senator McCain that "We do not support any plan that would cap only one select group of providers but not others, as we believe such a fix would unfairly skew the marketplace."

The ATIC Board strongly feels that extending the CAP down to each State, based on past state-level allocations, would provide an unfair advantage to those states that have acquired large sums from the USF in the past and would also place undue restraint on states that have a population growing at a higher rate with a greater need for USF funds.

We further suggest that, if it is determined that a state-level CAP must be assigned, each state CAP should strongly factor the relative on-going growth rate of that state. As such, an overall CAP could be pro-rated to each state based on the state's relative base-population and growth rate (per Census data, especially in rural areas). We believe such an approach more fairly focuses to the telecommunications needs of unserved and underserved communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michael C. Keeling".

Michael C. Keeling  
Chairman of the Board  
Arizona Telecommunications and Information Council

Kevin Martin, Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Mr. Martin:

I recently read an editorial in the Lincoln (NE) Journal Star which stated that the Federal Communications Commission has proposed capping the amount of subsidies paid to cell phone companies to improve service in rural parts of the United States.

I am a community activist who recently lead a petition in southeast Nebraska that quickly resulted in the names, addresses, and cell phone numbers of nearly 1400 frustrated Alltel customers in our area. We are frustrated because we pay the same amount for our cell phones that customers in the city pay, yet the reception in our area has become sporadic at best, and nonexistent at its worst. And now the FCC wants to cap the cell phone subsidies?


Those of us who live in rural areas need and deserve reliable cell phone service. But most importantly, we pay the same price for our cell service as residents of metropolitan areas. In addition, we are charged the same surcharge on our cell bills - a surcharge for the specific purpose of improving service in rural areas. It is my understanding that, without the federal subsidies, updating cell service in rural areas would be cost-prohibitive.

First and foremost, it is only fair that the people in rural areas get what we pay for. But that fact aside, people in rural areas need reliable cell phone service as much - if not MORE than - city residents. Why? Because if someone in a city has car trouble or has an emergency, he or she is almost always within walking distance of a telephone. In rural areas, we could walk for miles without ever reaching assistance.

Alltel Wireless answered our petition for better service by making a verbal commitment to build a new tower in Falls City, Nebraska in 2007. It is my understanding that this commitment would not have been possible without the federal subsidies that it received.

We in the rural communities pay our cell phone bills, so we expect, and quite frankly we deserve, the service. The cell phone industry is growing by leaps and bounds. If subsidies are necessary so rural areas can keep up with our changing world, then we need the subsidies. Residents of rural America need - and pay for-- RELIABLE cell phone service. It is only fair that we receive it. Don't forget about us. We need you.

Sincerely,

  
Lori Gottula  
Falls City, NE



Dear Bill:

Enclosed please find a copy of the letter that I sent to the chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, as well as our state and U.S. senators. I changed the letters to specifically meet the offices of each official, and thank you for making me aware of this issue.

As I stated in one of my e-mails, I am sending this note because of my belief that, if the federal government is going to give subsidies to improve telecommunications, those subsidies should include a fair percentage to the cell phone companies. Considering the rising number of cell phone users in rural areas, these subsidies are not only warranted, but necessary.

I will consider sending a note, also, to the World Herald and Lincoln Journal Star, but I must first edit it for brevity, and also make sure that my support of this issue will not, in any way, damage the relationship that I have with the local telephone company and its employees.

I have also enclosed in this envelope the communication that I received from an Alltel user about a rebate that has been continually denied to this customer. If you could help her, it would be appreciated.

Thank you so much. I'll keep in touch.

*Lou Grottel*